WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method comprising:

5 monitoring a plurality of application tiers, wherein said monitoring includes tracking one or more attributes associated with each of the application tiers;

displaying a plurality of objects each corresponding to a respective one of the application tiers;

in response to detecting a change in the one or more attributes associated with a

10 given application tier, altering the appearance of the corresponding object to reflect said change.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of objects includes a core object and one or more indicators in proximity to the core object.

15

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said altering comprises altering the appearance of the one or more indicators.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said altering further comprises altering the color

20 of the one or more indicators.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said altering further comprises coloring the one or more indicators blue for a no-alert status, coloring the indicators yellow for a near-critical alert status, and coloring the indicators red for a critical alert status.

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6. The method of claim 2, wherein the one or more indicators are arranged around the displayed object.

7.   The method of claim 3, wherein each of the plurality of indicators corresponds to a different attribute of the application tier.

8.   The method of claim 7, wherein the monitored attributes include performance trending, current performance, current load, load trending, service, maintenance, and a custom aspect.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein each of the one or more of objects is connected by a directional arrow, wherein the directional arrow represents the data flow between the plurality of application tiers.

10.   A system comprising:
        a plurality of application tiers;
        a performance management system operable to:
                monitor a plurality of application tiers, wherein said monitoring includes tracking one or more attributes associated with each of the application tiers;
                display a plurality of objects each corresponding to a respective one of the application tiers;
                in response to detecting a change in the one or more attributes associated with a given application tier, alter the appearance of the corresponding object to reflect said change.

11.   The system of claim 10, wherein each of the plurality of objects includes a core object and one or more indicators in proximity to the core object.

12.   The system of claim 11, wherein said performance management system is operable to alter the appearance of the one or more indicators.

13.   The system of claim 12, wherein said performance management system is further operable to alter the color of the one or more indicators.

14.   The system of claim 13, wherein said performance management system is further operable to color the one or more indicators blue for a no-alert status, color the indicators yellow for a near-critical alert status, and color the indicators red for a critical alert status.

15.   The system of claim 11, wherein the one or more indicators are arranged around the displayed object.

16.   The system of claim 12, wherein each of the plurality of indicators corresponds to a different attribute of the application tier.

17.   The system of claim 16, wherein the monitored attributes include performance trending, current performance, current load, load trending, service, maintenance, and a custom aspect.

18.   The system of claim 10, wherein each of the one or more of objects is connected by a directional arrow, wherein the directional arrow represents the data flow between the plurality of application tiers.

19.   A computer readable medium including program instructions executable to implement a method comprising:
        monitoring a plurality of application tiers, wherein said monitoring includes tracking one or more attributes associated with each of the application tiers;
        displaying a plurality of objects each corresponding to a respective one of the application tiers;

in response to detecting a change in the one or more attributes associated with a given application tier, altering the appearance of the corresponding object to reflect said change.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of objects includes a core object and one or more indicators in proximity to the core object.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 20, wherein said altering comprises altering the appearance of the one or more indicators.

22. The computer readable medium of claim 21, wherein said altering further comprises altering the color of the one or more indicators.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said altering further comprises coloring the one or more indicators blue for a no-alert status, coloring the indicators yellow for a near-critical alert status, and coloring the indicators red for a critical alert status.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 20, wherein the one or more indicators are arranged around the displayed object.

25. The computer readable medium of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of indicators corresponds to a different attribute of the application tier.

26. The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein the monitored attributes include performance trending, current performance, current load, load trending, service, maintenance, and a custom aspect.

27.   The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein each of the one or more of objects is connected by a directional arrow, wherein the directional arrow represents the data flow between the plurality of application tiers.

5   28.   A system comprising:

means for monitoring a plurality of application tiers, wherein said monitoring includes tracking one or more attributes associated with each of the application tiers;

means for displaying a plurality of objects each corresponding to a

10   respective one of the application tiers;

means for altering the appearance of the corresponding object to reflect a change in the one or more attributes associated with a given application tier change, in response to detecting said change.